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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001322

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SUBJECT: SOUTHERN SUDAN: LATEST INFORMATION ON THE LORD,S
RESISTANCE ARMY

Classified By: CGJ RWhitehead for reasons 1.5 (B) and (D)

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Ugandan officials have confirmed that the GOU has accepted the concept of contact with the Lord,s Resistance Army (LRA), but they were uncertain on the modalities. An initial meeting was postponed due to Vice President Machar,s travel to Khartoum but is expected to take place sometime the week on June 3. The Ugandans offered negative comments about Machar,s well documented provision of USD 20,000 to Kony. Rumors of an LRA attack between Juba and Torit may be inaccurate. End summary.

Details of LRA Meeting Unclear

¶2. (C) Head of Chancery Charles Mukaga and a political officer from the Ugandan Consulate in Juba told CG that President Museveni is still willing to engage in contact with the LRA but that the GOU was displeased by direct GoSS aid to Kony and company. They said that the an LRA delegation had been scheduled to come to Juba on May 29, but that the visit was postponed due to Machar,s travel to Khartoum for SPLM/NCP talks.

¶3. (C) Mukaga expressed uncertainty about Ugandan participation in the initial talks. He said that &he thought8 that consular officials would be involved and &probably8 there would be a delegation from Kampala. He admitted that he had little guidance from Uganda and no particulars on modalities from the GoSS. He shied away from the notion that the GoSS would play a mediating role.

Backlash over Kony Cash

¶4. (C) In reference to Machar,s last meeting with Kony, Mukaga said that the GOU was not pleased that Machar had given USD 20 thousand to Kony with a warning not to buy arms, an event that provided footage for a news clip on BBC and CNN. The Ugandans saw Kony as unreliable and likely to break his word. Mukaga claimed, for example, that a unit of LRA had recently traversed Sudanese territory from Garamba Park and staged a raid near Nimule, a claim that UNMIS could not substantiate, although it was unclear if the alleged attack took place on Sudanese or Ugandan soil. The political officer confirmed that Ugandan troops remain in static positions within southern Sudan but for now have ceased all operations and patrols.

¶5. (SBU) The BBC news clip also showed two Europeans, one identified as Simon Simon and a second who Mukaga said his

sources had identified as Douglas Johnson, a British academic and Sudan expert who was a member of the Abyei Boundary Commission. We have not confirmed this claim from other sources, although the figure on the news clip was identified as Johnson by someone who participated the same week in the Rift Valley Institute in Rumbek at which Johnson presented a paper.

¶6. (C) A well connected SPLM official confided to CG that Machar, who has been coy about assistance to the LRA, had not expected the news clip to air. He said that the Ugandans had released it, possibly to embarrass Machar in retaliation for support provided to the LRA, and noted that cutting a deal with Kony does not mean that justice might not be served later, as in the case of Charles Taylor. We do not know if any direct support continues to flow, although UNMIS has reported unusual air activity over Garamba Park in DRC and believes that chartered aircraft may be flying in.

Next Meeting

¶7. (C) A different SPLM source informed CG on June 2 that a LRA delegation will come to Juba sometime next week. Vincent Otti may head this group, but Joseph Kony is not expected to come. The GoSS does not know who will come from the Ugandan side, although Machar reportedly hopes that the Ugandan Vice President will attend.

Attack on Torit Road

¶8. (SBU) On June 1, Catholic Archbishop of Juba Paulino

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Lukudu Loro told CG that a catechist had been murdered two days earlier in an LRA raid on the Torit Road 47 miles east of Juba. The murder received press play, but UNMIS is not convinced that the LRA was involved and thinks that this may have been an act of routine banditry, although the possibility of a renegade LRA remnant remaining east of the Nile cannot be completely ruled out.

STEINFELD